

off firefighters. In Lorain, 33 percent of the time, fire station No. 4 is closed. But even with these frequent closures, they still put their lives on the line. They risk their lives without hesitation. Lorain firefighters Shawn Lloyd and Dan Russell were injured as they pulled a 6-year-old girl from a fire. Four firefighters from Elyria saved the 56-year old life of Russell Bowles, who wasn't breathing and had no heartbeat. They used a defibrillator to bring him back to life and then rushed him to the hospital.

In August, an Elyria Township firefighter was injured by a gas tank explosion as he was responding to a house fire. In Akron, fire captains Albert Bragg and Charles Twigg arrived at a house fire and were told someone was still in the home. Without hesitation, they ran into the house. They found the man and they carried him to safety. And when a man in Brunswick was experiencing a type of cardiac arrest known as the "widow maker" because it almost always results in death, it was firefighter Russ Merhaut and his fellow team members who arrived on the scene and resuscitated him.

First responders not only keep us safe, they also actively support our communities. This year, Barberton police officers and firefighters helped raise about \$1,800 for the Youth in Action fund during the Police versus Fire Olympics. In Strongsville, the fire department plays an active role in Safety Town, which is a fire safety program that teaches children about fire safety and prevention.

We can sleep soundly at night knowing that these men and women are here to serve and protect us. But all too often, their service comes at a costly price. Each year, approximately 80,000 of our Nation's firefighters are injured. And last year, 103 firefighters were killed. Those who have made the ultimate sacrifice put their community and their neighbors above their own lives. And even though our departed firefighters are no longer with us, the lessons they taught us will last forever. Their noble and unrelenting allegiance to public service embodies the American spirit, and I cannot imagine better role models.

For these reasons, our Nation's firefighters and first responders deserve our continued praise and support. H. Res. 731 expresses our great appreciation for these great men and women. However, true support should come in the form of job stability. Protecting the jobs of our first responders is a top priority in ensuring the safety of all communities.

I was very pleased that language included in the supplemental appropriations bill this year expanded the use of the SAFER grants to allow communities to retain and rehire firefighters. Communities in my district are looking forward to applying for those grants that they so desperately need.

Given the economic hardships currently facing our country, these grants

are critically important to the wellbeing of our firefighters and communities. Far too many communities have had to lay off firefighters. And as we all know, these fire department closures cause response times to be longer. This can be risky for emergency callers as well as for our firefighters because a working fire has more time to grow and become more dangerous.

Lorain firefighters need these SAFER grants, and Fire Chief Tom Brown is ready and waiting to apply for them. Elyria firefighters need these SAFER grants, and Elyria Fire Chief Rich Benton is ready and waiting to apply for them. In Akron, 38 firefighters have been laid off. Our firefighters are people with mortgages and young children. Akron firefighters need these SAFER grants, and Fire Chief Larry Bunner is ready and waiting to apply for them.

Competition for the estimated \$630 million for the entire country will be intense. In 2008, 72 firefighters protected the city of Elyria, but today only 46 are tasked with the duty. And our union presidents like Dean Marks and Jon George are working hard to preserve jobs and the safety of their communities. The IAFF and the OAPF are working hard to protect the jobs of these brave men and women.

Our Nation's first responders can never be thanked enough for their efforts. Through this resolution, we recognize their brave work, and it does not go unnoticed. We salute the sacrifices and commitment to our State and local government officials for their efforts to keep our communities safe and deter acts of terrorism. Let's get those SAFER grants out.

□ 1845

CZARS NEED TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, the reason I rise tonight is to follow up on my good friend Mr. POE of Texas. He was talking about 45 czars being appointed by the President to run this government in large part. The thing that bothers me about that and what Mr. POE said is that these people do not have to go through the normal process of confirmation in the Senate.

The reason we have that process of advice and consent of the Senate is to make sure that the people that are being appointed are not only capable of doing the job, but they don't have anything in their closets that is going to cause disrepute, disrespect, or anything on the administration. But the administration continues to appoint these people as czars in large part, I believe, because he doesn't want the American people to know their backgrounds.

We've had people that have been appointed who are admitted Communists, people who have been appointed who have been involved in supporting nefarious activities and deviant kinds of activities, and it just seems to me that the American people need to know those things. But unfortunately, the administration continues to appoint these czars because they know they do not have to go through the confirmation process. I think that's just wrong.

So, if I were talking to the President, I think if the American people were talking to the President tonight, as would Mr. POE, my good friend from Texas, would like to say, Hey, let's have these people unveiled. Let's find out what they're all about before they take on positions of responsibility, positions that spend taxpayers' money and make decisions on how this government is run. We need to know what kind of people they are. We need to know their backgrounds.

So I would just like to say, if I were talking to the President on behalf of the American people, Let's go through the regular process, Mr. President, just like you do with Cabinet appointees. Make sure that there is a background check done on them by the FBI so we know what they're about. Let's make sure they go through the confirmation process, through the Senate, through the committee system and are voted upon by the United States Senate so that they are confirmed. And if we do that, we'll know that they're competent people, honorable people who will do the job for the American people and not people that we're going to be embarrassed by later on.

IN AFGHANISTAN, "EIGHT IS ENOUGH" TO PROVE THERE'S NO MILITARY SOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today is the eighth anniversary of American involvement in Afghanistan. America will soon be at war in Afghanistan longer than we were in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War combined.

For 8 long years we've been trying to find a military solution in Afghanistan, but we have not succeeded. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent, and over 850 of our brave troops have died, but the insurgency continues to grow. Now President Obama is being urged to double down on the military option. Some people believe that all we need to do is send in 40,000 more troops, and then we can roll out the "mission accomplished" sign. But the last 8 years of fighting, Madam Speaker, have proven beyond doubt that there is no military solution to Afghanistan, and escalating the war now will only make things worse, not better.

A study done by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace found